

INCIDENT INTERRELATION REPORT NO. K. 3482

LOCALITY: MERSEBERG (LEUNA.) Synthetic Oil Plant.

PERIOD UNDER REVIEW.

This report covers damage to the target between 1322 hours on 14 NOV 1944 and 1515 hours on 24 DEC 1944. Attacks included are as follows:

U.S. 8TH AIR FORCE	21 NOV 1944	Reported to be	8/10 to 10/10 cloud.
BOMBER COMMAND	6/7 DEC 1944	" " "	10/10 cloud.
U.S. 8TH AIR FORCE	12 DEC 1944	" " "	10/10 cloud.
U.S. 8TH AIR FORCE	6 DEC 1944	" " "	10/10 cloud.

(S... 2929, 2989, 2971)

PROVISIONAL STATEMENT ON DAMAGE.

Photographs taken twenty days after the last attack show moderate damage scattered throughout the target area, however, there is also evidence of a great amount of repair and reconstruction in the target area. Part of the target near the Boiler Houses and the Gas Purification Plants is smoke obscured.

Installations damaged include the following:

A small injector house, oil refinery, compressor house, possible compressor house Hydrogen contact ovens, phosphate fertilizer plant, possible Petersen sulphuric acid plant, water gas plant, ammonia sulphate silo, ammonia nitrate silos, sulphur removal building, and a large gasholder. One large oil storage tank, six small tanks and a building with storage tanks have been damaged. In addition, one large, twenty small and six medium sized unidentified buildings have been damaged.

At least ten tracks in the siding on the East side of the target have been cut by approximately seven craters. About fifteen wagons of rolling stock have been damaged.

Details of damage are as follows:

(Numbers in brackets refer to Illustration 1(a)(iii) 15/14 & 1(a)(iii)15/14)

- Gasholder (110) : Blast wall blown away, probable damage to tank and pipe lines in this area.
- Sulphur Removal Building (16) : 2 small holes in roof.
- Ammonia Nitrate Silos (59) : Destroyed.
- Ammonia Sulphate Silo (55) : Large hole in roof.
- Oil storage (25) : Six small tanks damaged.
Three probably damaged.
- Possible Petersen Sulphuric Acid Plant (63) : Approximately one-third destroyed.
- Phosphate Fertilizer Plant (62) : Approximately 1/3 of roof stripped.
- Hydrogen Contact Ovens (22) : Approximately 2/3 destroyed. Pipe lines in this area appear to be damaged.
- Probable Compressor House (29) : Approximately 1/4 of roof stripped.
- Compressor House or Linde Liquid Air Plant (35) : Approximately 2/3 gutted.
- Probable Workshop (32) : Four large holes in roof.
- Compressor House and Liquid Air Plant (35) : Previously heavily damaged has been further damaged.
- Large Oil Storage Tank (27) : Top blown off. /Oil Refinery(24)

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Oil Refinery (24) : 1 Building 3/4 destroyed.
1 distillation plant has 3/4 of its roof
stripped.

Water Gas Plant (20) : Approximately 1/5 of roof stripped.

Unidentified Buildings damaged:

Small - 20
Medium sized - 66
Large - 1

(Print 4010)

This report is subject to correction and amplification from a more
detailed assessment.

PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY: 542 Squadron.

SORTIE: 106G/3894.

MEAN TIME AND DATE OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 15154 hrs. 24 DEC 1944.

SCALE: Approx. 1/10,000 (F.L. 36").

COVER AND QUALITY: Full cover with exception of two small sections which are
smoke obscured. Good quality prints.

LAST REPORT: K. 3363, dated 15 NOV 1944.

COMPARATIVE SORTIE USED: US7/3572.

PRINT DISTRIBUTED: 4010 (to follow when available).

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5-3

H. D. M.
W. M.

Date 30 Nov. 1944
13 CBW F.O. No. 500
13 CBW Ops. No. 238
3rd BD F.O. No. 500

SUBJECT: Tactical Report.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bomb Group, APO 559.

1. Information Concerning the Target:

- a. The primary target (visual) for today was the I. G. Farben-Industrie A. G., located near MERSEBURG, GERMANY. The target is a closely built up area 4,000 x 1,500 yards with the major axis in a NNW-SSE direction. This plant is engaged in the production of Fuels and Synthetic oils.
- b. The secondary target (PFF) for the 13th Wing was the same as the primary with all Groups on the same MPI.

2. Planning and Execution of the Mission:

a. Wing Order and Strength:

- (1) 93rd "A", "B" and "C" Groups: 9 x 13 A/C Squadrons.
 - (a) 490th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (b) 34th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (c) 493rd Group : 3 Squadrons
- (2) 13th "A", "B" and "C" Groups: 9 x 13 A/C Squadrons.
 - (a) 390th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (b) 95th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (c) 100th Group : 3 Squadrons
- (3) 4th "A", "B", "C", "D" and "E" Groups : 15 x 13 A/C Squadrons.
 - (a) 487th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (b) 385th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (c) 447th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (d) 94th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (e) 486th Group : 3 Squadrons
- (4) 45th "A", "B" and "C" Groups: 9 x 13 A/C Squadrons.
 - (a) 452nd Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (b) 96th Group : 3 Squadrons
 - (c) 388th Group : 3 Squadrons

b. A/C and C/C Available:

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(1)	95th Group	:	ME 43	A/C	54	G/C
			NE 40	A/C	50	G/C
			PTF 6	A/C	6	G/C
(2)	100th Group	:	ME 52	A/C	54	G/C
			NE 49	A/C	52	G/C
			PTF 8	A/C	5	G/C
(3)	390th Group	:	ME 49	A/C	53	G/C
			NE 46	A/C	52	G/C
			PTF 9	A/C	7	G/C

e. A/C Scheduled to Take-Off:

(1)	95th Group	:	36 A/C, plus 2 PTF A/C
(2)	100th Group	:	36 A/C, plus 2 PTF A/C
(3)	390th Group	:	36 A/C, plus 2 PTF A/C

d. A/C Airborne:

(1)	95th Group	:	All A/C scheduled, took off.
(2)	100th Group	:	All A/C scheduled, took off.
(3)	390th Group	:	All A/C scheduled, took off.

e. A/C Abortive:

(1) 95th Group:

A/C 1867B: 336 Sqdn.- Returned early because of gas leak in primer. Pilot, Lt. Bradley.

(2) 100th Group: A/C 8269K: 335 Sqdn.- Returned early, flak damage. Pilot, Lt. Helm.

A/C 815L : 351 Sqdn. - Landed in Brussels. Reported two engines out. No wounded. Pilot, Lt. Hughes.

(3) 390th Group:

A/C 926B : 569 Sqdn. - Returned early because No. 3 engine out. Pilot, Lt. Shira.

f. A/C Attacking, 390th Group:

Bombs Dropped

(1)	Primary Target	:	33	633 x 250 lb. GP
	Jettisoning	:	7	103 x 250 lb. GP
	Returning	:	None	

(2) Method of Bombing : Combination PTF and Visual.

(3) Method of Release : 100' Intervalometer Setting.

g. A/C Attacking, 95th Group :

Bombs Dropped

(1)	Primary Target	:	13	252 x 250 lb. GP
	Target of Opportunity:	:	22	424 x 250 lb. GP
	Jettisoning	:	3	60 x 250 lb. GP
	Returning	:	None	

(2) Method of Bombing : PTF and Visual assist.

- (3) Method of Release : 100' Intervalometer Setting.
- h. A/C Attacking, 100th Group : Bombs Dropped
- (1) Primary Target : 24 348 x 250 lb. GP
 Jettisoning : 16 285 x 250 lb. GP
 Returning : 2 6 x 250 lb. GP
- (2) Method of Bombing : PFF
- (3) Method of Release : 100' Intervalometer Setting.
- i. A/C Missing:

(1) 95th Group:

A/C 2560X: 334 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Wicker
 A/C 7383W: 334 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Payne

(2) 100th Group:

A/C 211Q : 349 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Anderson

(3) 390th Group:

A/C 080F : 568 Sqdn. Pilot, Capt. Gary;
 Col. Dolan, Command.
 A/C 407V : 570 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Peterson
 A/C 325T : 570 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Harris
 A/C 927R : 570 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Combs
 A/C 041M : 570 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Meigide
 A/C 519J : 571 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Booth
 A/C 836J : 570 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Jefferson
 A/C 456T : 569 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Phillips
 A/C 053W : 569 Sqdn. Pilot, Lt. Terrance

3. Narrative of the Attack:

a. Navigation, 13th "A" Group, 390th "A", "B" and "C" Squadrons:

(1) Assembly:

The 390th Squadrons all took off as scheduled and made a normal assembly, over their assigned Buncher. The Group was formed without difficulty. The Wing and Division Assembly route was flown as briefed, 13th "A" Group arriving at Southwold, two minutes early.

(2) Route:

Some "S"ing was experienced while crossing the Channel, while jockeying for position in the Division line-up. The enemy coast was crossed at 5114 - 0255, four minutes early. Over the continent excessive "S"ing was again encountered apparently to lose time and to gain proper intervals.

In the vicinity of Ghent the Division deviated from the briefed course and was off course 10 - 12 miles. At 5014 - 0544, course was altered to the east to CP3 (5016 - 0627) through the flak area along the battle front. Shortly after leaving CP3 the Division again deviated to the south of course and was from 12 - 20 miles off course at times.

They were unable to make good the IP due to the fact that the force was south of course. The 13th "A" Group overshot the turning point below the IP and used 5032 - 1215 as the selected IP and took up a 340° heading on the bomb run. Due to the fact that the 13th "A" Group had overshot to the east of the IP, this heading took them over the defenses of Zeitz where flak was encountered. From the town of Zeitz the 13th "A" Group altered course to 315° and made the bomb approach on Merseburg on this heading. The 13th "A" Group leader was shot down over the target, making it necessary for the low Squadron leader to take over the lead of the Group from this point.

The briefed route was closely followed from the rally point to 5012 - 0740, CP4. From CP4 the route flown was slightly right of course to 5120 - 0304 (Belgium Coast).

(3) Weather:

About 5/10 stratus was reported over England during assembly. Winds were from 310/35. Over the continent the cloud coverage was reported to have increased to 7/10. At the target a low haze and smoke was reported. Winds were from 320/45 knots.

(4) Difficulties:

Excessive "S"ing over the continent made it difficult to follow the briefed route. Being off course also made it difficult to make good the IP, thus exposing the 13th "A" Group to Zeitz flak on bomb run.

(5) Remarks:

Navigation was good. "S"ing could have been held to a minimum had the Groups gained proper interval on the Division Assembly line.

b. Navigation, 13th "B" Group, 95th "A", "B" and "C" Squadrons:

(1) Assembly:

The 95th Squadrons had no difficulty in assembling and effected a normal assembly. The Division Assembly line was cut short in order to remain in communication with the 13th "A" Group. The 13th "B" Group crossed CP1, three minutes early.

(2) Route:

The route flown across the Channel and over the continent was very similar to that flown by the 13th "A" Group. The 13th "B" Group was left of the 13th "A" on the approach to the IP and was unable to turn inside of the 13th "A" Group, causing them to overshoot the IP. 5042-1150 was the selected IP used when the turn on the bomb run was made. The 13th "B" Group also encountered the flak at Zeitz when the 95th "A" and 95th "B" bombed Meusel-Witz, the 95th "C" went on to bomb Merseburg, the primary target. The 13th "B" Group followed the briefed route closely on the route back.

(3) Weather:

Same as 13th "A" Group:

(4) Difficulties:

Excessive "S"ing was reported to be the main difficulty. Difficulty at the IP was similar to that of the 13th "A" Group.

(5) Remarks:

Navigation was good.

e. Navigation, 13th "C" Group, 100th "A", "B" and "C" Squadrons

(1) Assembly:

The three Squadrons from the 100th Group all took off and made a normal assembly. The Group was formed without difficulty. They were a minute early at the first point of the Wing Assembly, gaining time all along the assembly route, leaving OPl, five minutes early.

(2) Route:

The route flown closely followed that flown by the 13th "A" Group. The 13th "C" Group was unable to make their turn at the IP because the 13th "B" was to their left preventing them from turning. The 13th "C" turned at 5025-1211, using this as their IP and took up a 320° heading. The 13th "C" Group apparently began to climb while on the bomb run because they bombed from 28,200 feet. After bombs away the 13th "C" Group reformed at RP and followed the briefed course on the route out.

(3) Weather:

Same as 13th "A" Group.

(4) Remarks:

Navigation was satisfactory.

d. 390th Group, "A" Squadron:

(1) Air Leader:	Col. Dolan	Navigator :	Lt. Raaf
Pilot :	Capt. Gary	Asst. Nav.:	Lt. Verfurth
Co-Pilot :		Mickey Op.:	Lt. Evarcho
		Bombardier:	Lt. Farris

(2) A/C Attackings:

Bombs Dropped

(a) Primary Target :	11	212 x 250 lb. GP
Jettisoning :	1	20 x 250 lb. GP
Returning :	None	

(b) Bombing Altitude : 26,596 ft.

(c) Time of Release : 1317

(3) Run-In from IP to Target:

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(3) Weather:

Same as 13th "A" Group:

(4) Difficulties:

Excessive "S"ing was reported to be the main difficulty. Difficulty at the IP was similar to that of the 13th "A" Group.

(5) Remarks:

Navigation was good.

e. Navigation, 13th "C" Group, 100th "A", "B" and "C" Squadrons:

(1) Assembly:

The three Squadrons from the 100th Group all took off and made a normal assembly. The Group was formed without difficulty. They were a minute early at the first point of the Wing Assembly, gaining time all along the assembly route, leaving OPl, five minutes early.

(2) Route:

The route flown closely followed that flown by the 13th "A" Group. The 13th "C" Group was unable to make their turn at the IP because the 13th "B" was to their left preventing them from turning. The 13th "C" turned at 5025-1211, using this as their IP and took up a 320° heading. The 13th "C" Group apparently began to climb while on the bomb run because they bombed from 28,200 feet. After bombs away the 13th "C" Group reformed at RP and followed the briefed course on the route out.

(3) Weather:

Same as 13th "A" Group.

(4) Remarks:

Navigation was satisfactory.

d. 390th Group, "A" Squadron:

(1) Air Leader:	Col. Delan	Navigator :	Lt. Raaf
Pilot :	Capt. Gary	Asst. Nav.:	Lt. Verfurth
Co-Pilot :		Mickey Op.:	Lt. Evansho
		Bombardier:	Lt. Farris

(2) A/C Attackings:

Bombs Dropped

(a) Primary Target :	11	212 x 250 lb. GP
Jettisoning :	1	20 x 250 lb. GP
Returning :	None	

(b) Bombing Altitude : 26,596 ft.

(c) Time of Release : 1317

(3) Run-In from IP to Target:

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Attacking on a magnetic heading of 325°, the Squadron experienced considerable difficulty throughout the bomb run. The preceding Group had overshot the IP about 20 miles before turning on the the target. The bombardier could not pick up known check points to pin-point himself, since whole area was very effectively covered over by a smoke screen. As a result of the long bomb run and added heavy flak, the lead A/C went down after releasing its bombs, when another A/C collided with it.

(4) Photo-Intelligence Report:

(a) Photographs taken by this Squadron show 10/10 overcast.

(5) Bombing Malfunctions:

A/C 275: Aborted at IP, 20 bombs were jettisoned.

e. 390th Group, "B" Squadron:

(1) Air Leader: Maj. McHenry Navigator : Lt. Rosen
 Pilot : Lt. Kenny Asst. Nav.:
 Co-Pilot : Mickey Op.: Lt. Wilcox
 Bombardier: Lt. Weszyk

(2) A/C Attackings:

Bombs Dropped

(a) Primary Target	:	10	191 x 250 lb. GP
Jettisoning	:	4	61 x 250 lb. GP
Returning	:	None	

(b) Bombing Altitude : 27,586 ft.

(c) Time of Release : 1317

(3) Run-In from IP to Target:

(a) The IP was overshot about 20 miles which necessitated attacking the target on a magnetic heading of 325°. This was no fault of the Squadron. The M/O picked up the target in his scope and set up the course. A heavy smoke screen obscured the target, but the bombardier managed to pick up his assigned MPI. He quickly synchronized, but when the indices met, he was unable to release his bombs, because an unknown Squadron was directly below. He released his bombs when he cleared himself; as a result of this, the bombs hit over. C-1 auto-pilot was used on the bomb run.

(4) Photo-Intelligence Report:

(a) About one half of the bombs dropped by this Squadron fell in the extreme south portion of the target area. There was one direct hit on a Group of goods wagons in the M/Y, and several small unidentified buildings were blanketed with many bursts.

(b) The pattern indicated a loose formation and late releasing of bombs.

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(c) Bombing Errors:

Range : 5000 ft. S
 Deflection: 4756 ft. L
 Radial : 6800 ft.

(d) Bomb Pattern : 2145' L x 3575' W

(e) Percent of Bombs within 1000' and 2000' of the MPI: 0 % and 0 %.

(f) Bombing Results (In relation to the MPI) : Nil.

(5) Bombing Malfunctions:

A/C 225: Rack malfunction, one bomb jettisoned.
 A/C 926: Aborted, 20 bombs jettisoned.
 A/C - : Jettisoned 20 bombs.
 A/C - : Jettisoned 20 bombs.

f. 390th Group, "C" Squadron:

(1) Air Leader:	Lt. Wafts	Navigator :	Lt. Welsh
Pilot :	Lt. Stone	Asst. Nav.:	
Co-Pilot :		Mickey Op.:	Lt. Conroy
		Bombardier:	Lt. O'Brien

(2) A/C Attacking: Bombs Dropped

(a) Primary Target :	12	230 x 250 lb. GP
Jettisoning :	2	22 x 250 lb. GP
Returning :	None	

(b) Bombing Altitude : 26,700'

(c) Time of Release : 1317

(3) Run-In from IP to Target:

(a) The IP was overshoot about 20 miles which necessitated attacking the target on a magnetic of 335°. The M/O picked up the target in his scope and set up the course. The target was covered over by an effective smoke screen but the bombardier was able to synchronize using known check points, within the target area. The bomb run not very good, because the Squadron had to "S" considerably to keep from over-running the high Squadron. Very heavy and accurate flak was experienced on the bomb run. C-1 auto-pilot was used on the bomb run.

(4) Photo-Intelligence Report:

(a) The bombs from this Squadron fell beyond the target in open fields. There were three to five hits or near misses on the Merseburg/Leuna railway line.

(b) Bombing Errors:

Range : 7570 ft. 0
 Deflection: 650'ft. L

Radial : 8600 ft.
 (c) Bomb Pattern : 3155 ft. L x 2635 ft. W
 (d) Bombing Results: Nil.

(5) Bombing Malfunctions:

A/C 390: Rack malfunction, 2 bombs jettisoned.
 A/C 972: Aborted, 20 bombs jettisoned.
 A/C 013: Left bomb bay hung up momentarily, salvaged on target.
 A/C 176: Rack malfunction, one bomb salvaged on target.

g. 95th Group, "A" Squadron:

(1) Air Leader : Capt. Wright Navigator : Lt. Murry
 Pilot : Lt. Braund Asst. Nav.: Capt. Charles
 Co-Pilot : Lt. Baird Mickey Op.: Lt. Mitchell
 Bombardier: Lt. Davis

(2) A/C Attacking: Bombs Dropped

(a) Target of Opportunity : 10 192 x 250 lb. GP
 Jettisoning : 2 40 x 250 lb. GP
 Returning : None

(b) Bombing Altitude : 26,600 ft.

(c) Time of Release : 1314

(3) Run-In from IP to Target:

(a) Attacking the target on a magnetic heading of 316°, the bombardier mistook the oil refinery at Zeitz for the primary target. The target area was completely covered over with a very effective smoke screen, and because of a new heading the bombardier was unable to pin-point himself. Upon picking up the target the bombardier used known check points to position his cross hairs and release his bombs in the smoke. C-1 autopilot was used on the bomb run.

(4) Photo-Intelligence Report:

(a) The bombs from this Squadron fell in fields two to three miles E of Troglitz, Germany. Smoke from the target area prevents a complete interpretation and measurement of the pattern.

(5) Bombing Malfunctions:

A/C 867: Jettisoned 20 bombs at 52°19'N, 02°54'E, because of gas leak.
 A/C 047: Engine failed 10 seconds before bombs away. 20 bombs jettisoned.

h. 95th Group, "B" Squadron:

(1) Air Leader: Lt. Latham Navigator : Lt. VanPatten
 Pilot : Lt. Hendrickson Asst. Nav: Lt. Finfinger
 Co-Pilot : Lt. Louvies Mickey Op.: Lt. Jones
 Bombardier: Lt. Jones

- (2) A/C Attacking: Bombs Dropped
- (a) Target of Opportunity: 12 232 x 250 lb. GP
 Jettisoning : 1 20 x 250 lb. GP
 Returning : None
- (b) Bombing Altitude : 27,650 ft.
- (c) Time of Release : 1315

(3) Run-In from IP to Target:

- (a) Attacking on a magnetic heading of 320°, the oil refinery at Leitz was attacked instead of the primary target because of faulty target identification. The target area was very effectively covered over by a smoke screen, making proper identification of the target very difficult. The heading of the bomb run, confused the bombardier since he was unfamiliar with the check points. The bombardier positioned his cross hairs with aid of known check points, synchronized and released his bombs. C-1 auto-pilot was used on the bomb run.

(4) Photo-Intelligence Report:

- (a) The bombs from this Squadron fell in fields two to three miles east of Troglitz, Germany. Smoke from the target area prevents a complete interpretation and measurement of the pattern.

(5) Bombing Malfunctions:

A/C 583: Rack malfunction, 20 bombs jettisoned.

1. 95th Group, "C" Squadron:

- (1) Air Leader: Navigator : Lt. Ballatore
 Pilot : Lt. Gillen Asst. Nav.:
 Co-Pilot : Lt. McMurty Mickey Op.: Lt. Dement
 Bombardier: Lt. Lytle

- (2) A/C Attacking: Bombs Dropped
- (a) Primary Target : 13 252 x 250 lb. GP
 Jettisoning : None
 Returning : None
- (b) Bombing Altitude : 25,650 ft.
- (c) Time of Release : 1321

(3) Run-In from IP to Target:

- (a) Attacking on a magnetic heading of 339°, the M/O picked up the target in his scope and set up the course. The target was covered over with an effective smoke screen. The bombardier positioned his cross hairs with the aid of known check points outside the target area, synchronized and released his bombs into the smoke. C-1 auto-pilot was used on the bomb run.

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(4) Photo-Intelligence Report:

- (a) The one set of photographs taken by this Squadron show the bursts of only one A/O, No. 6528, which were approximately 7000 ft. NW of the MPI. There were several houses in a small village which were covered with bursts.
- (b) SAV photographs 13, 17 and 19 show smoke bombs, which would indicate that A/C 6528 released prematurely. The entire Squadron's bombs are not visible.

(5) Bombing Malfunctions:

A/C 199: Intervalometer failed, bombs toggled on target.

j. 100th Group, "A", "B" and "C" Squadrons:

- (1) Air Leader: Capt. Scott Navigator: Lt. Raden
 Pilot: Capt. Trapnell Asst.Nav.: Lt. Olinkowski
 Co-Pilot: Lt. Nelson Micky Op.: Lt. Kroton
 Bombardier: Lt. Davis

(2) A/O Attacking:

Bombs Dropped

(a) Primary Target	:	24	248 x 250 lb. GP
Jettisoning	:	16	285 x 250 lb. GP
Returning	:	2	6 x 250 lb. GP

(b) Bombing Altitude : 28,000 ft.

(c) Time of Release : 1320

(3) Run-In from IP to Target:

- (a) The IP was overshot 20 miles, consequently, the target was attacked on a magnetic heading of 340°. The M/O picked up the target in his scope and set up course. The bombardier clutched in at 11 miles and checks in rate were made at 9, 8, 7, 6, and 5 miles. Two rate corrections were necessary before final synchronization. Bombs were released in the smoke. C-1 auto-pilot was used on the bomb run.

(4) Photo-Intelligence Report:

- (a) The bombs from "A" and "B" Squadrons fell approximately 4-1/2 miles short (south) of the target in open fields. Scattered bomb pattern indicated a loose formation and late releasing of bombs.
- (b) One A/O, No. 8383, released its bombs in fields at Penkwitz, Germany, 51°02'N, 12°17'E.
- (c) The bombs from "C" Squadron fell in fields, a quarry, and the tiny village of Penkwitz, Germany, 51°02'N, 12°17'E.

(5) Bombing Malfunctions:

"A" Squadron

- A/C 297: Held bombs momentarily because of an A/C directly underneath.
 A/C 514: Released 4 bombs when doors opened.
 A/C 383: Personnel error caused bombs to be released. The navigator of the lead A/C of the low Squadron salvaged his bombs on this release causing the Squadron to release all of its bombs.

"B" Squadron

- A/C 610: Rack malfunction; one bomb jettisoned, 51004°N, 02023°E.
 A/C 994: Shackle installed backwards, one bomb returned.
 A/C 066: Rack malfunction, 5 bombs returned to base.

"G" Squadron

- A/C 673: Right bomb bay hung up momentarily.

4. Mission Camera Reports:

- a. The 390th Group installed 9 vertical and 3 scope cameras, 3 and 0 of which took pictures.

- 2 K-22 Missing in action.
 1 K-21 Missing in action.
 1 K-22 Malfunction (undetermined cause).
 2 K-21 A/C landed at Woodbridge.

Two PFF A/C were missing in action. The set in the third PFF A/C did not function properly, and no scope pictures were taken.

- b. The 95th Group installed 9 vertical and 3 scope cameras, 7 and 0 of which took pictures.

- 1 K-21 Camera A/C aborted.
 1 K-21 Shutter malfunction.

The 3 PFF scope cameras failed to take pictures: Cause undetermined.

- c. The 100th Group installed 9 vertical cameras, 7 of which took pictures.

- 1 K-21 Missing in action
 1 K-21 Blown fuse

5. Communications:

- a. VHF:

- (1) Channel "A" was reported as having continuous keying while over England but was clear while over the continent. Contact between Squadron and Group leaders was satisfactory after keying died down.
 (2) Channel "B" was well disciplined and clear. Communications with "Arrowswift" by Fireball leader were reported by "B" monitor as satisfactory. Fireball leader, MIA.

(3) Communications with weather scouting force and fighter support was good.

6. Controller's Log:


- a. Tentative alert at 1715 hours.
- b. Alerted at 1810 hours and the following information from 3rd Division:
 - (1) 13 CBW, 3 Groups 38 A/C per Group.
 - (2) Order of Groups; 13 CBW, 4th, 5th and 6th.
 - (3) Division Assembly line and approach.
 - (4) Targets.
 - (5) Route.
 - (6) Zero Hour.
 - (7) 1st Division target, 1st Division departure time and place.
- c. 3rd Division change in the route point. Some more information on targets at 1905 hours.
- d. 2030 hours: Callsign and flares of other Group obtained.
- e. 13 CBW Adv. Wrng. to F.O. No. 500 sent at 2020 hours.
- f. All Groups received Adv. Wrng. at 2040 hours.
- g. 3rd Division to Duty Officer: No leaflet loading for 390th.
- h. Bomb load at 2235 hours.
- i. Received 3rd BD F.O. No. 500 at 2345 hours.
- j. 13 CBW F.O. No. 500 sent at 2355 hours.
- k. 13 CBW F.O. No. 500 received by Groups at 0035 hours.
- l. Intelligence Annex to 3rd BD F.O. received at 2220 hours.
- m. Annex No. 1 Adv. Wrng. 13 CBW F.O. No. 500 sent at 2330 hours.
- n. Annex No. 1 to 3rd BD F.O. No. 500 received at 2400 hours.
- o. 45th CBW F.O. No. 318 received at 0110 hours.
- p. Annex No. 3 to 13 CBW F.O. No. 500 sent at 0115 hours.
- q. 4th CBW F.O. No. 368 received at 0142 hours.
- r. Intelligence Annex No. 2 to 3rd BD F.O. No. 500 received at 0155 hours.
- s. Annex No. 2 to 13 CBW F.O. No. 500 sent at 0210 hours.
- t. Annex No. 2 to 3rd BD F.O. No. 500 received at 0230 hours.
- u. Annex No. 1 to 93rd CBW F.O. No. 171 received at 0320 hours.
- v. 93rd CBW F.O. No. 171 received at 0304 hours.
- w. Annex No. 2 to 93 CBW F.O. No. 171 received at 0330 hours.
- x. Annex No. 2 to 4th CBW F.O. No. 338 received at 0340 hours.
- y. Annex No. 3 to 93 CBW F.O. No. 171 received at 0432 hours.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Tactical Report, 30 November 1944 (Cont'd)

- n. Annex No. 3 to 3rd BD F.O. No. 500 received at 0735 hours.**
- aa. Annex No. 3 to 13 CBW F.O. No. 500 sent at 0745 hours.**
- bb. Annex No. 4 to 93rd CBW F.O. No. 171 received at 0805 hours.**
- cc. Annex No. 4 to 4th BW F.O. No. 338 received at 0819 hours.**

For the Commanding Officer:


**GENE G. SMITH,
Major, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.**

DECLASSIFIED

Authority ANNEX 745005

By MS NARA Date 7/20/07

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

AFPO 559.
2 December 1944.

SUBJECT: Report of Operations Officer, Mission of 30 November
1944.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bomb Group (H), APO 559.

1. GENERAL NARRATIVE: The 95th "A" Squadron, flying as lead squadron in the 13th "B" Combat Wing, with 95 "B" Squadron high, and 95 "C" Squadron low - took off from base at 0857 - 0906 hours and assembled over base at 11,000 feet by 1005 hours.

The 95th "B" Squadron, took off from base at 0845 - 0856 hours and assembled over the field at 12,000 feet by 1005 hours.

95th "C" Squadron took off at 0907 - 0917 hours and assembled over field at 10,000 feet by 1005 hours.

After assembly - the Squadrons joined in group formation and proceeded to Buncher 11, where wing assembly with the 390th and 100th Groups was effected at 1013 hours. Due to 13 "A" Group being early at the Division line - the 95th Group (13 "B") was forced to lose time in order to maintain wing integrity. As a result, 13 "B" departed the English coast at Southwold, three minutes early, at 1035 hours. Climb to bombing altitude was begun.

The enemy coast was crossed at 1100 hours at an altitude of 15,000 feet. Upon approaching Brussels, a slight turn to the right was made by the "A" wing leader and the entire wing formation flew slightly south of course on to the I.P. At the I.P., the 95th Group was left of 13 "A", and was unable to turn inside of 13 "A" for the bomb run. This caused the 95th Group to overshoot the I.P. some 20 or 25 miles. At a point 5025N - 1230E, at 1300 hours, the 95 "A" Squadron turned on the bomb run. The lead bombardier mistook the oil refinery at Zeitz for the primary target - and bombed this visually at 1314 hours, altitude 27,000 feet.

The 95th "B" Squadron, following close behind, also dropped on Zeitz - with bombs away at 1315 hours, from an altitude of 28,000 feet.

The 95th "C" Squadron sighted the target with Mickey equipment and bombed the primary target by H₂X at 1314 hours!

from 26,000 feet.

Heavy flak was encountered by the three squadron and two ships lost over the target.

After bombing, the 95th "C" Squadron, having lost sight of "A" and "B" squadrons, joined formation with the 100th Group (13"C" Wing) and followed the course out with them. 95 "C" arrived at the base immediately after the "A" and "B" Squadrons.

After rallying, the 95th "A" and "B" Squadrons began their descent and followed the route out, remaining a little south of course until reaching the enemy coast out. This was crossed at 1542 hours at an altitude of 6,000 feet.

The English coast was recrossed at 1621 hours, base reached at 1632 and landing effected at 1631 - 1724 hours.

2. AIRCRAFT NOT ATTACKING: 95 "A" Squadron - Eleven A/C plus one PFF left base in formation shown in Diagram "A". A/C 1867 returned before becoming dispatched and does not receive a sortie. The remaining eleven ships receive sorties.

95 "B" Squadron - Twelve aircraft plus one PFF left base in formation shown in Diagram "B". All thirteen ships bombed the target of opportunity and receive sorties.

95 "C" Squadron - Twelve aircraft plus one PFF left base in formation shown in Diagram "C". All aircraft bombed the primary target and receive sorties.

3. AIRCRAFT LOST: A/C 42-102560 - hit by flak over target, burst into flames, broke in two. Two chutes.

A/C 42-97383 - hit by flak over target. Plane went into steep controlled dive. No chutes seen.

DON A. POMEROY, JR.,
Major, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

1. DATE 30/Nov/44 TARGET _____ DUTY OFFICERS _____
2. CBW 13B GROUP 95C GP. LEADER LT. Gillen A/C ³³⁴ 7230 W/T WLW - M
 POSITION Low. DEPUTY LDR. LT. Payne A/C ³³⁴ 7383 W/T WLW - W.
~~0750855~~ ~~08050905~~ ~~09051005~~

HEADQUARTERS 3D BOMBARDMENT DIVISION
 "J" FORM

GP.
 STA.

1. DATE 30/Nov/44 TARGET _____ DUTY OFFICERS _____
2. CBW 13B GROUP 95C GP. LEADER LT. LATAM. A/C ⁴¹⁴ 7992 W/T WDF - Q
 POSITION High. DEPUTY LDR. LT. FLETCHER A/C ³³⁵ 8255 W/T SBA - A
3. EST. TAXI TIME ⁰⁸³⁵ ~~0740~~ EST. T.O. 1ST A/C ⁰⁸⁴⁵ ~~0750~~ LTD BASE ⁰⁹⁰⁵¹⁰⁰⁵ ~~0915~~

HEADQUARTERS 3D BOMBARDMENT DIVISION
 "J" FORM

GP.
 STA.

1. DATE 30/Nov/44 TARGET _____ DUTY OFFICERS _____
2. CBW 13B GROUP 95A GP. LEADER CAPT. WRIGHT A/C ³³⁶ 7961 W/T JBC - K.
 POSITION LEAD DEPUTY LDR. LT. Helm. A/C ³³⁵ 8269 W/T SBA - K
3. EST. TAXI TIME ⁰⁸⁴⁵ ~~0750~~ EST. T.O. 1ST A/C ⁰⁸⁵⁵ ~~0800~~ LTD BASE ⁰⁹⁰⁵¹⁰⁰⁵ ~~0915~~

WTF BASE 1615

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

E-F-26

30 November 1944

SUBJECT: Lead Bombardier's Narrative, Ninety Fifth "A" Squadron, Mission
of 30 November 1944, Merseburg, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Group (H), A.A.F.

1. Narrative.

a. Bombing aids used were E-6-B and C-2 computers. P.F.F. aircraft and A.F.C.E. equipment was used.

b. At the I.P. we made a left turn of 90° at 1306 hours.

c. Bomb bays were opened after we leveled off at I.P. at 1306.

d. There was a very effective smoke screen completely covering the target area, but I found a few check points around the target and dropped my bombs in the smoke using check points in the area for reference. Bombs were away at 1314 hours.

e. Bombing results were unobserved.

f. No suggested changes are made.

2. Bombardier's form 12-E modified is attached.

3. Disposition of Bombs - A/C

				Bombs		Fuzing
Main Bombfall	Over Target	Bombing	No.	Size	Type	Nose Tail
Merseburg, Germany.	11	11	192	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40
Total on Target.			192	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40
Bombs Returned.			0			
Other Expenditures.			40	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40
Total (loaded on A/C taking off).			232	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40

4. Types of Release - All 192 x 250# G.P. AN-M57 bombs dropped on the target were released on a 100' interval and armed.

RAYMOND D. DAVIS
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Lead Bombardier.

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DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 745005
By ASNARA Date 7/20/07

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

E-F-26

30 November 1944

SUBJECT: Lead Bombardier's Narrative, Ninety Fifth "A" Squadron, Mission
of 30 November 1944, Merseburg, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Group (H), AAF.

1. Bombing Approach and Run - At the I.P. we made a left turn of about 90° at 1304 hours. It was a visual run and I synchronized four times before bombs away. There was a very effective smoke screen completely covering the target area but I found a few check points around the target and dropped my bombs in the smoke using check points in the area for reference. Bomb bay doors were opened after we leveled off at the I.P. at 1306 hours and bombs were away at 1314 hours. Results were unobserved.

2. Disposition of Bombs - 12 A/C were dispatched from the 95th "A" Squadron. 11 A/C were over the primary target dropping 192 x 250# G.P. AN-M57 bombs. A/C #1867 aborted and jettisoned 20 x 250# G.P. AN-M57 bombs at 5219N 0254E. A/C #7047 had an engine failure and jettisoned his bombs 10 seconds before bombs away, by order of the Pilot. He jettisoned 20 x 250# G.P. AN-M57 bombs. Fuzing was 1/10 nose and 1/40 tail.

3. Types of Release - All 192 x 250# G.P. AN-M57 bombs dropped on the target were released on a 100' interval and armed.

4. Tabular Summary - A/C

Main Bombfall	Over Target	Bombing	Bombs			Fuzing	
			No.	Size	Type	Nose	Tail
Merseburg, Germany.	11	11	192	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40
Total on Target.			192	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40
Bombs Returned.			0				
Other Expenditures.			40	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40
Total (loaded on A/C taking off).			232	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40

RAYMOND D. DAVIS
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Lead Bombardier.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority AIN/D 745005

By ASNARA Date 7/2/07

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HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

E-F-26

30 November 1944

SUBJECT: Lead Bombardier's Narrative, Ninety Fifth "B" Squadron, Mission of 30 November 1944, Merseburg, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Group (H), A.A.F.

1. Bombing Approach and Run - Approach to I.P. was about 5 miles south of course. We overshot the I.P. about 20 to 25 miles. We made a left turn of 120° onto bombing run. This put us in trail of the low squadron. M.ockey was not able to aid us on run until the last three minutes. We were able to do pilotage from the I.P. to the target. Rate was killed and drift approximated before we were in range of the target. After target area was picked up in sight, synchronization was hampered by highly effective smoke screen. I was unable to locate M.P.I. and dropped on smoke of previous bombing. Bombs were away at 1315 hours.

2. Disposition of Bombs - 13 A/C were dispatched with 95th "B" Squadron. 13 A/C were over primary target and dropped 252 x 250# G.P. AN-M57 bombs. All bombs dropped were fused 1/10 nose and 1/40 tail.

3. Types of Release - All bombs dropped by 95th "B" Squadron were at 100' interval and armed.

4. Tabular Summary - A/C

				Bombs		Fuzing
Main Bombfall	Over Target	Bombing	No.	Size	Type	Nose Tail
Merseburg, Germany.	13	13	252	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40
Total on Target.			252	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40
Bombs Returned.			0			
Other Expenditures.			0			
Total (loaded on A/C taking off).			252	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40

CHARLES T. JONES
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
Lead Bombardier.

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DECLASSIFIED

Authority A/N/D 745005
By NSNARA Date 7/29/07

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

E-F-26

30 November 1944

SUBJECT: Lead Bombardier's Narrative, Ninety Fifth "B" Squadron, Mission of 30 November 1944, Merseburg, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Group (H), A.A.F.

1. Narrative.

a. Bombing aids used were E-6-B and C-2 computers and 8th AF Grid.

b. We made a left turn onto the Initial Point of about 120°.

c. Bomb bay doors were opened after turn onto Initial Point.

d. Mickey operator was not able to aid on run until the last three minutes. We were able to do pilotage from I.P. to the target. Rate was killed and drift approximated before we were in range of the target. Synchronization was hampered by highly effective smoke screen. Bombs were away at 1315 hours.

e. Bombing results were unobserved.

f. No changes are suggested in bombing tactics.

2. Bombardier's form 12-E modified is attached.

3. Disposition of Bombs - A/C

	Over Target	Bombing	No.	Size	Type	Fuzing
Main Bombfall						Nose Tail
Merseburg, Germany.	13	13	252	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40
Total on Target.			252	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40
Other Expenditures.			0			
Bombs Returned.			0			
Total (loaded on A/C taking off).			252	250#	M-57	1/10 1/40

4. Types of Release - All bombs dropped by 95th "B" Squadron were at 100' interval and armed.

CHARLES T. JONES
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
Lead Bombardier.

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DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 745005
By ASNARA Date 7/29/07

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

E-F-26

30 November 1944

SUBJECT: Lead Bombardier's Narrative, Ninety Fifth "C" Squadron, Mission of 30 November 1944, Merseburg, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Group (H), A.A.P.

1. Narrative.

- a. Bombing aids used were E-6-B and C-2 computers.
- b. A left turn of 120° was made onto the bombing run.
- c. Bomb doors were opened after turn onto bombing run.
- d. Bombardier saw fires and smoke in target area and after checking his synchronization dropped into the smoke. Bombs were away at 1314 hours after which squadron made a sharp left turn away from the target. Heavy smoke screen and haze was over target area.
- e. Results were unobserved.
- f. No suggested changes are to be made.

2. Bombardier's form 12-E modified is attached.

3. Disposition of Bombs - A/C		Bombs			Fuzing		
Main Bombfall	Over Target	Bombing	No.	Size	Type	Nose	Tail
Merseburg, Germany.	13	13	252	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40
Total on Target.			252	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40
Other Expenditures.			0				
Bombs Returned.			0				
Total (loaded on A/C taking off).			252	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40

4. Types of Release - All bombs dropped by 95th "C" Squadron were at 100' interval and armed.

MILTON R. LYTLE
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
Lead Bombardier.

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Authority NND 745005

By AUSNARA Date 7/2/07

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

E-F-26

30 November 1944

SUBJECT: Lead Bombardier's Narrative, Ninety Fifth "C" Squadron, Mission of 30 November 1944, Merseburg, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Group (H), A.A.F.

1. Bombing Approach and Run - Group approached I.P. south of course and made a turn of 12° onto bomb run. Mickey operator set up course and evasive action was taken to avoid heavy accurate tracking flak. Bomb doors were opened after turn onto bomb run but were closed and opened twice to allow squadron to catch up with lead ship. Heavy smoke screen and haze were over target area. Bombardier saw fires and smoke in target area and after checking his synchronisation dropped into the smoke. Bombs were away at 1314 hours after which squadron made a sharp left turn away from target. Results were unobserved.

2. Disposition of Bombs - 13 A/C were dispatched with 95th "C" Squadron. 13 A/C were over the secondary target and dropped 252 x 250# G.P. AN-M57 bombs. A/C #2560 blew up over the target but was seen to drop his bombs on the target. A/C #7383 is M.I.A. but dropped his bombs on the target before leaving the formation. All bombs dropped were fuzed at 1/10 nose and 1/40 tail.

3. Types of Release - All bombs dropped by 95th "C" Squadron were at 100' interval and armed.

4. Tabular Summary - A/C

Main Bombfall	Over Target	Bombing	No.	Size	Type	Nose	Tail
Merseburg, Germany.	13	13	252	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40
Total on Target.			252	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40
Bombs Returned.			0				
Other Expenditures.			0				
Total (loaded on A/C taking off).			252	250#	M-57	1/10	1/40

MILTON E. LYTLE
2nd Lt., Air Corps.
Lead Bombardier.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority ANND 745005

By NSNARA Date 7/20/07

HEADQUARTERS
 NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
 Office of the Engineering Officer

APO 569,
 30 November 1944.

SUBJECT: Engineering Report on Combat Mission of 30 November 1944.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Gp (H). Attention:
 Lt Col MUMFORD.

1. The following information is submitted concerning combat mission of 30 November 1944.

- a. Thirty-eight (38) B-17G airplanes took-off as scheduled.
- b. Thirty-five (35) B-17G airplanes returned to base after completion of combat mission.
- c. B-17's 42-102560 and 42-97383 are missing in action.

2. There was one (1) abortive airplane.

- a. 42-31867 - Leaking primer pump.

3. Battle damage is as follows:

- a. 44-8230 - #4 main tank chg.
- b. 42-107154 - Sheet metal.
- c. 44-6528 - feeder tank chg.
- d. 43-38776 - Lt outer wg panel chg.
- e. 42-102455 - sheet metal.
- f. 42-97375 - sheet metal.
- g. 42-107047 - sheet metal.
- h. 44-8269 - sheet metal.
- i. 43-38760 - sheet metal.
- j. 44-8475 - sheet metal.
- k. 42-97961 - main spar rt wg.
- l. 43-38199 - #4 main tank.
- m. 42-31939 - sheet metal.
- n. 43-38617 - sheet metal.
- o. 43-38283 - #3 engine chg.
- p. 42-106993 - hydraulic system & sheet metal.
- q. 44-6583 - ignition harness.
- r. 42-97257 - #1 engine chg.
- s. 42-32066 - major sheet metal.
- t. 43-38281 - main tank chg.
- u. 44-8331 - #1 & #2 engine chg.
- v. 42-97232 - left wg panel chg.

CLARENCE D. FIELDS,
 Major, Air Corps,
 Base Engr. Officer.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 745005

By NSNARA Date 7/20/07

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
OFFICE OF THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

1 December 1944

SUBJECT: S-2 Report for 95A, B, and C, on the mission to
Merseburg, Germany, 30 November 1944.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bomb Group (H), APO 559.

1. Eleven A/C plus 1 PFF A/C from the 95th Group took off beginning 0857 to form the lead (95A) Squadron of the 13B Combat Group to attack targets at Merseburg. A/C 1867 aborted over base at 0958 due to gas leak in primer line.

Twelve A/C plus 1 PFF A/C took off beginning 0845 to form the high (95B) Squadron of the 13B Combat Group to attack Merseburg.

Twelve A/C plus 1 PFF A/C took off beginning at 0907 to form the low (95C) Squadron of the 13B Combat Group to attack Merseburg.

2. No E/A was encountered by this group during the mission.

3. The following flak was encountered by this group:

Merseburg: Intense, accurate, tracking and barrage.

Zeitz : Intense, accurate, tracking and barrage.

Frankfurt: Meager, inaccurate, tracking.

5223-0859: Meager, inaccurate, barrage.

4. 95A and B Squadrons bombed target of opportunity, approximately (5103N-1215E), by visual means. The I.P. was over shot by these two Squadrons some 20 to 25 miles. This, plus a very effective smoke screen misled the bombardier into believing he was hitting the assigned target. 95C Squadron's bombs fell about 1,000 yards to the west to the assigned MPI. A very effective smoke screen encountered over assigned target.

5. The course was flown as briefed with the exception of flying a little to the south all the way. The IP was overshoot but briefed course was regained after the target.

Two A/C failed to return. A/C 2560 was hit by flak at 1520 hours in the fuselage near the bomb bay and plane burst into flames, rolling on its back and going down. At about 5,000 ft below the formation the fuselage broke in half at about the radio room. Two chutes were seen. A/C 7383 was hit by flak just before bombs away. #1 engine was smoking. Bombs were dropped and plane went into a steep, controlled dive, disappearing from sight at about 1518 hours. No chutes seen.

Fighter support was excellent. Last A/C landed at 1737.

-1-

ROBERT W. MICHELS,
Captain, Air Corps,
Ass't. S-2 Officer.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 745005
By NSNARA Date 7/29/01

WR
Shu
Covs

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE
AAF STATION 101
APO 634

INTOPS SUMMARY NO. 186

PERIOD: 0001 hours 2 November to 2400 hours 2 November 1944

A. STATISTICS

	<u>Missions</u>	<u>Disp.</u>	<u>Sorties</u>	<u>Atkg.</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Claims</u>	<u>Losses</u>				<u>Totals</u>
							<u>E/A</u>	<u>AA</u>	<u>N/E</u>	<u>OT</u>	
Heavy Bomber Atks.	5	1168x	1133	1100	2652.1	36-35-27	14	14	2	10	40
Fighter Escort	17	934xx	842	0	0	132-5-25A 25-0-0 G	1	2	10	15	28
Fighter Sweeps	0	0	0	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Fighter Bombing	0	0	0	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Photo Recon.	5	5	5	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	1	1
Weather Recon.	10	42	40	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	1	1
Air/Sea Rescue	0	0	0	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Operations	<u>4</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0-0-0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Totals	41	2186	2057	1100	2652.1	168-40-52A 25-0-0 G	15	16	12	27	70

x 17 spares, 11 used.

xx In addition to above statistics, one group Ninth A.F. P-38s flew general area support. 34 dispatched - 31 sorties. No claims. No losses.

B. OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

1. Bomber Attacks

Thirty combat wings (814 B-17s, 354 B-24s - 1168 a/c) dispatched in five forces against synthetic oil plants at Merseburg/Leuna, Castrop-Rauxel, Sterkrade (Holten) and Bielefeld/Schildesche RR and M/Y. Four assigned targets. 1100 a/c dropped 2652.1 tons on all primaries and several T/Os. All bombing by PFF except force on Bielefeld. Heavy opposition met by two forces in Merseburg target area. Escorting fighters attacked by approximately 500 s/e e/a plus 15 Me-163s. Bomber claims: 36-35-27. Losses: 40 a/c (39 B-17s, 1 B-24).

S E C R E T

First Force

Twelve combat wings (460 B-17s) dispatched against Merseburg/Leuna Synthetic Oil Plant. 436 a/c dropped 1029.7 tons GP on primary and 8 T/Os at 1203-1238 hours from 23,800-28,500 feet. Primary bombed on PFF. Leaflets dropped on Merseburg. Weather: 6/10-9/10 en route, 10/10 over target. Flak: intense and very accurate. Battle Damage: 252 minor, 87 major. E/A Opposition: strong enemy effort curbed by escorting fighters. No e/a sighted prior to arrival at IP. Attacks on stragglers by 10 FW-190s and 5 Me-109s. Approximately 9 Me-163s made single attacks on one group. Claims against Me-163s, 2-1-1. Total Claims: 6-2-2. Losses: 12 a/c (7 to AA, 1 to non-enemy, and 4 to unknown reasons).

Fighter Support: Eight groups (483 P-51s) dispatched. Up 0930-1012 hours, down 1500-1530 hours. 433 sorties. One additional group of Ninth Air Force P-38s provided general area support (figures not included in above statistics - 34 P-38s dispatched, 31 sorties. No claims or losses). E/A Opposition: strong enemy defensive effort met in target area by approximately 200 e/a. Breakdown of opposition encountered by individual groups as follows:

- Group 1 - 15 plus Me-163s and 4 plus Me-109s encountered S and E of Merseburg. 2 Me-163s and 2 Me-109s destroyed in combats. One Me-163 came through bomber formation in target area and was caught by group leader on making 180 degree turn. Other Me-163 destroyed in similar manner near Leipzig.
- Group 2 - Approximately 20 FW-190s and Me-109s encountered W of Naumburg (S of Merseburg) attacking rear combat wings. Majority of e/a evaded in overcast. Claims: 1-2-2.
- Group 3 - 15 plus Me-109s and FW-190s dived through last combat wing in Mulhausen area (approximately 65 miles W of Merseburg). 9-0-0 claims in combats to deck.
- Group 4 - 100 s/e e/a sighted in gaggles of approximately 30 plus a/c each on SW course from Merseburg. Lead flights routed force, breaking it into elements of 2, 3 and 4 a/c. Claims: 18-1-2.
- Group 5 - 12 Me-109s sighted S of Merseburg. 2 e/a engaged to deck for claims of 1-0-1.
- Group 6 - 6 Me-109s and 2 FW-190s attacking bombers in vicinity of Mulhausen engaged for claims of 1-0-0. Two jet-propelled a/c seen N of Zeitz and vicinity of Einbeck.
- Group 7 - Trailing flight attacked 6 Me-109s making pass on bombers NW of Merseburg for claims of 1-0-1. 25 plus Me-109s engaged W of Naumburg after e/a had completed pass at bombers. 7 e/a destroyed. 4 jet-propelled e/a encountered before target but e/a evaded.
- Group 8 - 20 Me-109s from vicinity of Leipzig attacked bombers S of target. Group claims 3-0-4. One lone FW-190 destroyed on deck NW of target. 6 Me-163s seen in Naumburg area, evading due to high speed.

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In ground strafing attacks three groups made claims of 0-0-3 gliders, 7-0-2 locomotives and 1-0-36 freight cars. Another group strafed A/F believed to be Warnigrode A/F claiming 25 s/e e/a destroyed on the ground. Total claims: 46-3-10 air, 25-0-0 ground. Losses: 15 P-51s (at least 3 a/e are believed safely down in Belgium).

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u> <u>GP</u>	<u>Results</u>
Merseburg/Leuna (Syn. Oil Plant)	460	383	901.7	Unobserved
<u>Other Targets</u>				
Wolfenbittel (5212N-1032E)		13	29.0	Unobserved
T/O Halle		23	56.5	Unobserved
6 T/Os		17	42.5	Unobserved
Totals	460	436	1029.7	

Second Force

Six combat wings (223 B-17s) dispatched against Merseburg/Leuna Synthetic Oil Plant. 215 a/e dropped 478.5 tons GP on primary and 3 T/Os at 1230-1243 hours from 26,800-29,000 feet. Leaflets dropped on Merseburg. All bombing on E/F. Weather: 7/10-10/10 over most of the Continent; 10/10 at target. Flak: moderate to intense and accurate at Merseburg. Battle Damage: 95 minor, 57 major. E/A Opposition: severe opposition encountered in target area. Four groups attacked by approximately 155 e/a, principally FW-190s and Me-109s including a few Me-163s. E/a made both frontal assaults and concentrated against stragglers. Claims: 30-33-25. Losses: 26 B-17s. (14 to e/a, 5 to AA, 1 to non-enemy, and 6 to unknown reasons).

Fighter Support: Four groups (245 P-51s) dispatched. Up 1007-1015 hours, down 1520-1635 hours. 209 sorties. E/A Opposition: heaviest opposition of operation sustained by this force. Breakdown by groups as follows:

- Group 1 - 200/300 Me-109s encountered near Weissenfels attacking last box of B-17s. Combats from 27,000 feet to deck. Claims: 10-0-2. 4 Me-109s caught in landing pattern over Batterfeld A/F. Claims: 2-0-0. 150 Me-109s and FW-190s attacking bombers ten miles south of target. Claims: 12-0-3. Additional claims from scattered combats: 4-1-0.
- Group 2 - Two waves of 50 plus e/a each (FW-190s and Me-109s) proceeding W from Dresden area engaged. Group split up force, preventing attacks on bombers. Claims: 38-1-4.
- Group 3 - 30 Me-109s intercepted in Weimar area for claims of 5-0-0. Two gaggles of 4-6 s/e e/a chased in target area for claims of 1-0-2.
- Group 4 - Combats with 100 plus e/a, predominantly Me-109s, in target area. Claims: 14-0-4.

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Total claims: 86-2-15. Losses: 10 P-51s (at least 3 a/c are believed safely down in Allied territory).

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Target</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u> <u>GP</u>	<u>Results</u>
Merseburg/Leuna (Syn. Oil Plant)	223	210	469.5	Unobserved
<u>Other Targets</u>				
3 U/I T/Os		5	9.0	Unobserved
Totals	223	215	478.5	

Third Force

Five combat wings (208 B-24s) dispatched against Bielefeld/Schildesche RR viaduct and M/Y. 191 a/c dropped 399.8 tons GP and 38.5 tons IB - 438.3 tons on the primaries and Bielefeld City at 1221-1242 hours from 20,000-24,000 feet. Leaflets dropped on Bielefeld. Weather: 3/10-4/10 undercast permitted some groups to bomb visually, others on Gee-H. Flak: Nil to meager, inaccurate. Battle Damage: 17 minor. E/A Opposition: One Me-262 made ineffective attack on straggler south of Brunswick. Two other Me-262s fired rockets from 150 yards. Three additional Me-262s sighted. Claims: nil. Losses: nil.

Fighter Support: Three groups (146 P-47s dispatched). Up 1022-1030 hours, down 1415-1429 hours. 143 sorties. 6 Me-262s and one Me-163 attacked straggling B-24 and fighter flights in target area, evading combat by outdistancing our a/c. Claims: nil. Losses: 2 P-47s.

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u> <u>GP</u>	<u>IB</u>	<u>Results</u>
Bielefeld/Schildesche RR Viaduct	208	172	351.8	38.5	Very Good
<u>Other Targets</u>					
Bielefeld M/Y		10	26.0		Good
Bielefeld City		9	22.0		Good
Totals	208	191	399.8	38.5	

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Fourth Force

Four combat wings (146 B-24s) dispatched against Castrop-Rauxel Synthetic Oil Plant. 131 a/c dropped 403 tons GP on the primary at 1213-1225 hours from 22,000-24,000 feet. All bombing on Gee-H. Weather: 10/10 undercast. Flak: nil to meager, inaccurate. Battle Damage: 23 minor. E/A Opposition: 4 Me-262s sighted in target area, one of which made ineffective attack. One Me-262 made weak pass in vicinity of Deventer. Claims: nil. Losses: 1 B-24 to AA.

Fighter Support: One group (40 P-47s) dispatched. Up 1026 hours, down 1429 hours. 37 sorties. Mission uneventful. No e/a seen. Claims: nil. Losses: nil.

Details of bomber attack as follows:

<u>Assigned Target</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u> <u>GP</u>	<u>Results</u>
Castrop-Rauxel (Syn. Oil Plant)	146	131	403.0	Unobserved

Fifth Force

Three combat wings (131 B-17s) dispatched against Sterkrade (Holten) Synthetic Oil Plant. 127 a/c dropped 302.6 tons GP on primary and one T/O at 1157-1254 hours from 26,800-29,000 feet. Sterkrade (Holten) bombed on Gee-H. Rheine M/Y bombed visually. Weather: 8/10-10/10 over primary. Flak: moderate to intense, fairly accurate. Battle Damage: 36 minor, 16 major. E/A Opposition: nil. Claims: nil. Losses: 1 B-17 to AA.

Fighter Support: One group (20 P-47s) dispatched. Up 1035 hours, down 1350 hours. 20 sorties. No e/a seen. Sweep of Groningen area resulted in claim of one locomotive destroyed. Claims: nil. Losses: nil.

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Target</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u> <u>GP</u>	<u>Results</u>
Sterkrade (Holten)(Syn. Oil Plant)	131	107	254.5	Unobserved
<u>Other Targets</u>				
Rheine M/Y		20	48.1	Fair
Totals	131	127	302.6	

2. Fighter Escort

Seventeen groups (728 P-51s, 206 P-47s - 934 a/c) dispatched. Up 0930-1030 hours, down 1350-1635 hours. 842 sorties. One additional group of Ninth Air Force P-38s provided general area support in Merseburg target area without incident, (34 P-38s dispatched, 31 sorties, no claims, no losses). Groups escorting bombers against Merseburg/Leuna Synthetic Oil Plant encountered 500 plus s/e e/a and 15 Me-163s in target area. Groups escorting other forces met negligible opposition. Total claims: 132-5-25 air, 25-0-0 ground. Losses: 28 a/c (26 P-51s, 2 P-47s).

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3. Fighter Sweeps

Nil.

4. Fighter Bombing

Nil.

5. Photo Reconnaissance

Five Mosquitoes dispatched. Two a/c completed experimental navigation for night photography. Two a/c dispatched on night photography flights over Kassel and Eisenach areas; one failed to return. One a/c successfully completed day photographic mission. Losses: one a/c.

6. Weather Reconnaissance

42 a/c (33 P-51s, 4 B-24s and 5 Mosquitoes) dispatched. P-51s scouted weather for bomber forces. Two early returns. All a/c returned safely. One B-24, dispatched from Azores, completed routine flight to home base, two B-24s completed flights over Atlantic to west of England. One B-24, overdue on routine flight to Azores. Mosquitoes completed special flights to Germany, Holland, Belgium and North Sea. Losses: one a/c (missing).

7. Air/Sea Rescue

Nil.

8. Special Operations

Thirty-seven a/c dispatched as follows:

8 P-51s and 2 P-47s dispatched as radio relays. A/c returned safely.
12 B-17s "screened" bomber force. A/c returned safely.

7 B-24s dispatched on RCM mission, jamming between 1815 - 1950 hours.
A/c returned safely.

3 B-17s and 5 B-24s dropped leaflets in Holland. A/c returned safely.

C. INTELLIGENCE

1. Enemy Air Opposition

Strong enemy opposition was experienced by the 1st and 2nd Forces in today's bombing operation against Merseburg/Leuna Synthetic Oil Plant. Escorting fighters encountered approximately 500 s/e e/a plus at least 15 Me-163s, all of which attempted to intercept bombers in the Merseburg target area. The other forces on shallower targets were negligibly or not at all opposed.

Of the 1st Force escort, the 55th Fighter Group met the only large formation of e/a approximately 100, flying toward the bombers in three gaggles of 30 plus each at 32,000 feet, southeast of Merseburg. These were dispersed and attack on the bombers prevented. The 4th Fighter Group, sweeping on a wide front ahead

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of the bombers, encountered only 15 Me-163s in the target area which were also broken up. Other escort groups report engagements with two smaller e/a formations, 20 - 25 each shortly after the target.

The 2nd Force was more heavily opposed beginning with an engagement by the 352nd Fighter Group, north and east of Merseburg with two waves of 50 e/a each. The 364th Fighter Group at the same time, also encountered two waves of 50 e/a each in the target area and the 20th Fighter Group engaged the largest single concentration of e/a, 150 - 200, just south of Merseburg while they were attacking the rear bomber formation. This is the only engagement reported by the bombers when 40 - 60 e/a were able to make coordinated attacks lasting for 10 - 15 minutes.

Penetration and withdrawal routes were uneventful for both forces.

2. Flak

Merseburg/Leuna	- intense, very accurate
Bielofeld	- nil to meager, inaccurate
Castrop-Rauxel	- nil to meager, inaccurate
Sterkrade (Holtzen)	- moderate to intense, fairly accurate
Weissenfels	- meager to moderate, accurate
Naumburg	- meager to moderate, accurate

3. Observations

20 t/e a/c, possibly Me-410, on A/F near Bitterfeld.
15 plus s/e e/a on A/F vicinity of Seehausen.
3 Me-163s, 2 Me-109s and Ju-88 on Brandis A/F.
30 plus s/e fighters, some with engines running, seen on eastern and southern edge of Erfurt/Bindersleben A/F.

4. Damage to Enemy Installations

Merseburg/Leuna - Unobserved Results

Dense undercast and effective smoke screen in operation at the target make it impossible to plot the main weight of bombs dropped. However, the following concentrations could be seen: (1) one concentration of GP bombs fell in open field bursting approximately $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles southeast of the target. (2) Two concentrations of GP bombs fell into open field northeast of the town and in Klepzig, located $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Halle and $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles northeast of Merseburg.

Combat crews of last group over the target reported smoke and flames through 14,000 feet of clouds.

Sterkrade (synthetic oil plant) - Unobserved Results

9/10 to 10/10 cloud cover covers entire area. Through one break in the clouds it is possible to see a small concentration of GP bombs bursting adjacent to the southeast corner of the target area. No assessment of damage can be made.

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Rheine M/Y - Fiar Results

Two concentrations of GP bombs can be seen bursting in and adjacent to central portion of M/Y immediately south of the goods depot. There were twelve hits on rail lines in the M/Y. Two large multi-bay factory buildings northwest of the multiple track railroad bridge received three direct hits. The southernmost building which had received two hits at the northwest corner is approximately ten percent damaged. Slight damage will result to residences in the southern part of town.

Castrop/Rauxel - Unobserved Results

10/10 solid cloud.

Bielefeld M/Y and Viaduct - Very Good Results

Viaduct appears to be well hit, remainder of bombs seen to be striking built up part of city.

Bielefeld M/Y - Good Results

Viaduct three miles north northeast of the city was also hit with very good results. No further details.

NOTE: The foregoing is based on preliminary information and should not be used for record purposes.

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